

Science in a Box Reflection

11/17/11

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The lesson guide I was using said to place a hole in the top of the cups (for the crowing cup activity) with a thumb tack and pull the string through. That didn't work, I had to stab the top of each cup with a pair of scissors and then pull the string through. This would have been dangerous for the kids to do, so I had all cups prepared with their string and paper clips ready to go. I wanted the kids to add their own creative touch to crowing instrument, so I decided to let them cut their own beaks and crests. I pre-cut the yellow and red construction paper down to a fourth of a page for each child. My mentor and I decided it would be best to use tape for the construction paper and glue for the goggle eyes.

I started the lesson off by reading the objective from the state standards on sound from the board. I then passed out the formative assessment. The assessment results engaged the kids. They were already surprised about what they were learning about sound. I played the video next. The kids enjoyed it. They laughed and determined the pitches of the sounds out loud. That was okay with me because they were actively involved and were not distracting others from the video. When the video was over, I passed out the cups and we started making them crow. I showed the kids the example of my cup and told them after we tested sounds with them, that they would decorate their cup. They all tried short pulls on the string, long pulls, slow pulls, and fast pulls. A couple kids tried to remove their strings... They discussed the pitches and volumes at which the cups were crowing.

We then went over my formal assessment as a class, I understand this made it informal, but I didn't feel like the kids were capable of producing adequate results on paper in a formal manner. Many of these third graders have trouble with reading and writing. Some of the questions were probing type questions that are good for discussion and inquiry. I wanted to discuss it as a class. I went over each question and students raised their hands to answer. The question about what the difference would have been if we had used paper instead of plastic cups was really good. That really got the kids thinking. They wanted to try it, but we didn't have time to do that. Many said they were going to try it at home. Some even inquired about what using different types of string would do.

I have not seen any science taught the entire time I have been in this class. The kids were so excited when I told them we were doing a science lesson. One of the major things I noticed was that the kids who normally get their work finished last-or not at all-finished first! They were active and engaged in the entire lesson. I think if they could do science at least twice a week it would help kids who have trouble in writing, reading, and math enjoy school more. Day after day I see consistent solemn attitudes from the same few kids in the class that struggle, but today I saw them smile. I saw them enjoy learning, and that is the attitude I wish I could see more often.

The only thing I might have done differently, which I considered doing several times before hand, was to have a few instruments or sound makers for the kids to try. I could have incorporated this right after the video and I think it would have been a nice addition.

